



NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

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Niantic Resident Awarded by the SBA for Dedication to the Advancement of Women's Business Ownership in the State

Hartford—Barbara Potopowitz, Public Information Officer for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) has been named Women in Business Advocate of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for both the State and the Region.

As the Public Information Officer for the state Legislature's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, Barbara is extremely committed to the advancement of women's business ownership. Barbara develops and administers the agency's educational, informational and other public relations activities through public speaking, publication development and by direct access to the media.

Barbara designed and maintains the Commission's website with a special feature, "Resources for Women-Owned Businesses" which includes information on starting a business, training, financing and other programs for women-owned businesses.

Barbara coordinates the Women's Economic Development Initiative (WEDI) for the Commission, which won a national SBA Visions 2000 award in the women entrepreneur category. The mission of this project is to work with women, legislators, leaders in government and the business community to create and enhance women's economic development growth opportunities. Barbara also works with the CT Department of Transportation, Public Works and Administrative Services to set policy for their business set-aside programs and is a member of the state legislative committee for the CT Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners, who recognized her in 1999 for her work advocating for women business owners. Barbara also works on issues relating to women in prison and actively formed *The Working Group on Prison Issues* that she led for three years. During National Women Business Owners Week last week, Barbara organized a program at the women's prison that brought 8 women business owners into the prison to talk with inmates in the vocational educational program about business ownership after their release from prison.

Barbara is listed in Who's Who in Advertising, Who's Who in Sales and Marketing, Who's Who in The East and Who's Who in America. She was awarded "Woman of the Year" from the Norwich Business & Professional Women Organization and is the recipient of many awards in the fields of education, communication and public relations.

The SBA annually recognizes individuals and businesses for their experience, expertise and devotion to their professional and personal lives to bettering the small business environment. This recognition is made in conjunction with the nationally celebrated Small Business Week in Orlando, Florida during SBA Expo '04 held May 19-21.

Barbara and all SBW 2004 award recipients will be honored on Thursday, June 3, 2004 at The Belvedere (formerly Septembers), in New Haven, CT. If you would like more information on this event, or next year's nominations contact Debra Dillon at (860) 240-4700 ext. 242.

A complete list of the 2004 Small Business Week award recipients is attached.

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2004 SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AWARD WINNERS

Small Business Person of the Year

Lesley Mills

Griswold Special Care

New Haven, Hartford, Waterbury, Meriden, New London, CT

Nominated by

Richard Blumenthal, Attorney General

State of Connecticut

REGIONAL AWARD WINNERS

Minority Small Business Advocate
of the Year

Rafael Collazo

CT Small Bus. Development Center
Hartford, CT

Nominated by

Zaiga L. Antonetti

CT Small Bus. Development Center

Women in Business Advocate
of the Year

Barbara Potopowicz

Perm. Comm. on the Status of Women
Hartford, CT

Nominated by

Rose E. Bednarz

Gateway Community College

Small Business Journalist
of the Year

Mitchell Young

Business New Haven
New Haven, CT

Nominated by

Rose E. Bednarz

Gateway Community College

DISTRICT AWARD WINNERS

Veteran Small Business
Advocate of the Year

Charles C. Young

CT Department of Labor
New London, CT

Nominated by

Lou Kennedy

US Department of Labor

Financial Services Advocate
of the Year

Edward E. Cull

Citizens Bank Connecticut
Middletown, CT

Nominated by

John Rosevear

Citizens Financial Group

Small Business Exporter
of the Year

Raymond Browne

David Monighetti

Wyrepak Industries, Inc.
Middletown, CT

Nominated by

Sandra K. Weber

Hudson United Bank